

D-Day Memorial 2010

Today is the 6th of June.

Sixty-six years ago this morning, June 6, 1944, Allied forces, of which U.S. soldiers were a major part, under the overall command of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower landed on the enemy-occupied coastal regions of Normandy, France.

Their purpose was to free the European Continent, and eventually the entire world, from a reign of terror by a man who had determined that he would rule the world through powerful armies, a ruthless aggression, and a genocidal agenda.

It was not an easy task, but through sheer courage and fortitude and the iron resolve of a determined leadership, the combined Allied forces breeched the sea wall of fortress Europe in the first chapter of what would come to be known as one of the greatest chronicles of victory the world had ever known until that day.

I have stood on the beach at Normandy and wept as I walked among the graves of those Americans who gave their last drop of blood – who made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of the freedom of other people.

In the generations that followed WWII, the idea of patriotism, self-sacrifice and the fight for freedom was lost in the politics of self-gratification and the rights and autonomy of the individual.

For many years, the calling to serve one's country in the armed forces was looked down on by our culture. Veterans of such wars as Vietnam were demeaned and treated with disdain by an ungrateful society.

We thank God that today, there appears to be a rebirth of patriotism, the love of freedom, and a revival of an old adage that all that it takes for evil to prosper is for good men to do nothing.

Once again, our sons and daughters are not only proud to serve in the armed forces, but are recognized as heroes by an ever-grateful population.

I think it is proper, on this day of remembrance, that we recall the sacrifices made by the men and women of our country – who laid down their lives for their brothers and sisters of the United States and in the greatest sense of altruism, on behalf of people they would never meet – those in foreign countries persecuted by oppressive governments who were powerless to defend themselves.

This morning, I invite you to stand with me for a moment of reflection and remembrance in honor of the fallen and as we offer up a prayer of gratitude to Almighty God in whose hands and by whose mercies we continue to experience the joy and privilege of the freedoms of speech, of assembly, and of worship.